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Magnitude of the Problem

Since 2006, the number of blighted parcels in Battle Creek has risen significantly. Battle Creek has 17,118 residential parcels and in the last seven years, more than 16% of those parcels have become vacant and abandoned. The resources used resolving code violations for these blighted properties are staggering. The following is a small sampling of violations and represent both closed and pending code issues.

Properties in Vacant and Abandoned Program (residential only)	.	.	.	.	.	2803
-Number of Inspections – 39,147						
Properties Required to be Secured	.	.	.	.	.	537
Dangerous Buildings	.	.	.	.	.	917
Noxious Weed/Long Grass Violations	.	.	.	.	.	7161
-Number of Inspections - 18,467						

Suggested Changes

Tax Foreclosed Properties held by Treasurer

- Remove the no-minimum-bid auction requirement on tax foreclosed properties
- Prohibit people from purchasing property at auction when they have defaulted in the last 3 years

Municipal Tools

- All property held by a municipality needs to be tax exempt, remove the public use requirement
- Denial of permits on primary residence when owner has outstanding code violations on other property
- Provide municipalities with the ability to more easily pierce the corporate veil where owners are using LLC's to avoid personal responsibility
- Mandatory statewide surcharge on homeowner policies to create a fund to be used by municipalities for rehabilitation, demolition, and securing
- Require municipalities to report the owner and address of unfit, blighted, deteriorated property to the Secretary of State for publication on the SOS website until such time as the condition is resolved. This statewide database could be used to prohibit these individuals from purchasing new properties at tax sales.
- Allow municipality to take ownership of tax foreclosed property from Treasurer without being required to pay back taxes